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Health and marriage and divorce in the ACT

The ACT had the lowest proportion of smokers in Australia, but the highest alcohol consumption rates. The 2001 marriage rate (per one thousand people) in the ACT was the lowest recorded since 1932. These are the findings released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The main 2001 health findings for the ACT include:

- The majority (84%) of ACT residents considered their overall health to be good, very good or excellent.
- 81% of Canberrans reported they had one or more long-term medical conditions. This was the highest of all states and territories (excluding NT). The most common was hayfever and allergic rhinitis (26%).
- More ACT females (26%) than males (15%) used medication for their mental well-being.
- One in five adults (20%) smoked. This was the lowest proportion of smokers of all states and territories (excluding NT). The ACT had the highest proportion of ex-smokers (29%) of all states and territories (excluding NT).
- The majority of adults (68%) had consumed alcohol in the week prior to interview. This was the highest rate of all states and territories (excluding NT). Those aged 45-54 years had the highest level of risky and high risk consumption of alcohol (15%).
- Although the ACT had the lowest proportion of people who were overweight or obese of all states and territories (excluding NT), 42% of the ACT's population were overweight or obese.
- The ACT had higher immunisation rates than the national rates for all diseases surveyed.

Marriage and divorce findings for the ACT in 2001 include:

- 1,572 marriages were registered in the ACT. The ACT and South Australia had the third lowest marriage rate (both 4.9 per one thousand people).
- First marriages made up just over two-thirds (67% or 1,060 marriages) of all marriages in the ACT.
- The median age of marriage for ACT grooms was 30.1 years and for ACT brides 28.3 years.
- Almost three-quarters (74%) of all marriages registered in the ACT were between people who lived together before marriage.
- More marriages were performed by civil celebrants (51%) than ministers of religion (49%). The most common religious ceremonies were Catholic (39%) and Anglican (25%).
- 1,684 divorces registered in the ACT in 2001. Around 5% of those divorced had separated within the first year of marriage.
- 53% of ACT divorces involved children under 18 years, effecting a total of 1,707 children.

These findings and more details on the ACT's demography, labour force, prices, building and construction, crime and justice, finance, retail, economy, transport and climate are included in the December quarter 2001 issue of **Australian Capital Territory Statistical Indicators** (cat. no. 1367.8).

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